

Crocodile safety

How do I stay safe in areas with saltwater crocodiles?

BE CROCWISE. Crocodiles are potentially dangerous to humans. People should never take unnecessary risks in crocodile habitat. Saltwater crocodiles inhabit both saltwater and freshwater habitats.

Some of the ways to stay safe in areas that may have saltwater crocodiles include:

- Never swim in water where crocodiles may live even if there is no warning sign. Only swim in designated safe swimming areas.
- Obey all crocodile warning signs — they are there for your safety and protection.
- Always keep a watch for crocodiles. They will see you before you see them.
- Never provoke, harass or interfere with crocodiles, even small ones.
- Never feed crocodiles — it is illegal and dangerous.
- Be extra vigilant around water at night and during the breeding season from September to April.
- Avoid approaching the edge of the water and don't paddle or wade at the edge of the water.
- Stay well back from any crocodile slide marks. Crocodiles may be close by and may approach people and boats.
- The smaller the boat, the greater the risk.
- Always stand a minimum of five metres from the water's edge when fishing.
- Be especially vigilant when launching or retrieving your boat in saltwater crocodile habitat.
- Do not lean over the edge of a boat or stand on logs overhanging water.
- Never dangle your arms or legs over the side of a boat. If you fall out of a boat, get out of the water as quickly as possible.
- Camp at least 2 metres above the high water mark and at least 50 metres from the water's edge. Avoid places where native animals and domestic stock drink.
- Avoid returning regularly to the same spot at the water's edge to fill your bucket.
- Dispose of food scraps, fish offal and other waste properly and away from your campsite.
- Never leave food scraps, fish frames or bait at your campsite. Always check that previous campers have not left these behind.
- Never prepare food, wash dishes or pursue any other activities near the water's edge or adjacent sloping banks. Instead, fill up your bucket and move away from the edge of the water before you start any tasks.

What should I do if I see a saltwater crocodile in the wild?

Saltwater crocodiles are common throughout the Top End and Katherine regions of the Northern Territory, so it is likely that people will encounter crocodiles.

If you see a crocodile in an area that is clearly marked as a safe location for entering the water, or an area that is managed to remove all crocodiles, you should contact Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory on:

- 0419 822 859 or (08) 8999 4691 (Darwin region)
- 0407 958 405 or (08) 8973 8888 (Katherine region).

Are there certain times of year that it is safe for me to enter the water?

No, it is never 100% safe. While crocodiles may be more active during the warmer months (Wet season), when the air and water temperatures are higher, it should never be assumed that it is safe to enter the water at any time of the year.

Is it safe for my pets to swim, even if I can't?

No. Crocodiles will also prey on other animals, including pets.

What is the NT Government doing to keep the public safe?

The Northern Territory Government has a number of strategies in place to protect the public against saltwater crocodile attacks. This includes:

- active management in specific locations using traps, harpooning techniques, and/or surveys to find and remove crocodiles;
- educational programs to inform the public about ways that they can keep themselves safe in crocodile habitat; and
- promoting responsible behaviour in crocodile habitat.

For further information visit www.nt.gov.au/becrocwise